

OUTGOING MESSAGE

COMINT

Approved For Release 2002/01/14 : CIA-RDP78S01932A000100020032-1

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CLASSIFICATION

CONFIDENTIAL

MESSAGE HANDLING INDICATOR

CIA/OCI

DATE-TIME GROUP

LOHIZ

CITE

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MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

CIA/WHSS

SOURCE REF:

25X1A

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| 3 | | 6 | | 9 | | 12 | |

TO: IMMEDIATE WHITE HOUSE//SITUATION ROOM FOR MR MCMAHON,

STATE RCI//OPERATIONS CENTER FOR MR FRY, NMCC//ATTENTION CIA

WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED

ITEM NO: L 25X1A

DATE: 12 FEB 74

SUBJECT: SYRIAN SHELLINGS COULD LEAD TO ISRAELI RETALIATION

REF :

ISRAEL MAY BE PLANNING

TO TAKE STRONG RETALIATORY ACTION IN RESPONSE TO SYRIAN SHELLINGS OF ISRAELI CIVILIAN SETTLEMENTS ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS ON FEBRUARY 11.

THE ISRAELI PRESS CLAIMS THAT THE THREE-THREE HOUR SYRIAN BARRAGE ALONG THE ENTIRE FRONT YESTERDAY WAS ONE OF THE HEAVIEST SINCE THE OCTOBER WAR, AND INCLUDED THE SHELLING OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS THERE FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE. TWO ISRAELIS WERE KILLED, INCLUDING ONE CIVILIAN, AND FIVE SOLDIERS WERE WOUNDED.

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ONE SETTLEMENT WAS SEVERELY DAMAGED.

ISRAELI OFFICERS REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE SYRIAN FIRE WAS PERFECTLY COORDINATED AND TIMED TO CATCH THE SETTLERS BY SURPRISE AND BEFORE THEY COULD SEEK COVER. ISRAELI COMMENTATORS SUGGESTED THAT THIS SHOWED DAMASCUS HAD MADE DELIBERATE DECISION TO INFLECT MAXIMUM CASUALTIES. ACCORDING TO ISRAELI PRESS,

THE

ATTACKS VIOLATED A TACIT SYRIAN-ISRAELI UNDERSTANDING WHEREBY TEL AVIV REFRAINED FROM RETALIATORY AIR STRIKES AS LONG AS DAMASCUS LIMITED ITS ATTACKS TO MILITARY TARGETS. THE PRESS SUGGESTED THAT ISRAEL MIGHT NOW RESPOND BY SEIZING DAMASCUS AIRPORT OR BY CONDUCTING AIR RAIDS ON SYRIAN MILITARY POSITIONS.

THE ISRAELI PRESS SPECULATES THAT DAMASCUS MAY HAVE LAUNCHED THE ATTACKS IN RESPONSE TO PRIME MINISTER MEIR'S RECENT STATEMENTS ABOUT ISRAEL'S RETENTION OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS AND TO PRESS REPORTS ABOUT GOVERNMENT PLANS TO START BUILDING A NEW CITY THERE. OTHER REPORTS SPECULATE IT MAY REPRESENT SYRIAN MUSCLE-FLEXING PREPARATORY TO MOVING TOWARD A DISENGAGEMENT

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AGREEMENT.

TEL AVIV HAS SHOWN SOME RESTRAINT IN THE PAST IN THE FACE OF SYRIAN SHELLINGS. CONTINUED ATTACKS ON CIVILIAN SETTLEMENTS, PARTICULARLY IF THEY RESULT IN MORE ISRAELI CIVILIAN CASUALTIES, ARE LIKELY TO RESULT IN A LIFTING OF THESE SELF-IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS. THIS, IN TURN, COULD LEAD TO AN ESCALATION OF THE FIGHTING BY BOTH SIDES INVOLVING PERHAPS HEAVY ARTILLERY EXCHANGES AND AIR STRIKES. E2 IMPDET.

(SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION: MEA DIV, [REDACTED])

25X1A

DATE: 12 FEB 74
 ORIG: [REDACTED] UHSS 25X1A
 UNIT: CIA OPERATIONS CTR 25X1A
 EXT: [REDACTED]

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